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Effect of Reimplanting Feedlot Heifers with Ralgro® and/or Synovex-H® ¹

Dan LaTourell, Gerry Kuhl and Calvin Drake

Summary

Implanting heifers initially and mid-way through the finishing period with Ralgro and Synovex-H in any combination produced similar weight gains. Daily gains of cattle implanted with Ralgro + Ralgro, Ralgro + Synovex-H, Synovex-H + Ralgro and Synovex-H + Synovex-H were 3.66, 3.61, 3.66 and 3.75 lbs, respectively.

Introduction

There is little research data as to the preferred sequence of Ralgro and Synovex in feedlot reimplanting programs. This field trial was conducted to provide such data on implanting combinations with feedlot heifers.

Experimental Procedure

One hundred twenty seven 700 lb yearling heifers mostly from Alabama were randomly allotted to four implant treatments: 1) initial Ralgro, Ralgro reimplant; 2) initial Ralgro, Synovex-H reimplant; 3) initial Synovex-H, Ralgro reimplant; 4) initial Synovex-H, Synovex-H implant. All implants were placed in the soft tissue at the base of the ear. All heifers were individually identified and non-shrunk weights were taken at the beginning of the trial, at reimplanting time (43 or 52 days) and at the end of the trial (107 days), when the heifers averaged 1050 lbs. The cattle were fed in the same pen and handled similarly throughout the trial.

Results

Average daily gains are shown in Table 36.1. There were no significant ($P < .05$) differences among any of the implant combinations. Daily gain prior to reimplanting (first period) averaged 4.44 lb with Ralgro and 4.52 lb with Synovex-H; those reimplanted (second period) with Ralgro averaged 3.07 lb vs. 3.10 lb with Synovex-H. The seemingly high gains achieved were due to a 6% shrink from pay weight to in-weight of these southern cattle, and the absence of shrink at the end of the trial.

¹ Appreciation is expressed to the Knight Feedlot, Lyons, KS for cattle management and facilities, and International Minerals and Chemical Corp. and Syntex Agri-Business, Inc. for implants.

Table 36.1. Effect of Implant Sequence on Daily Gain of Feedlot Heifers

Implant sequence	No. Heifers	Feeding period		
		First	Second	Overall
..... Average Daily Gain, lb				
Ralgro + Ralgro	31	4.41	3.10	3.66
Ralgro + Synovex-H	32	4.48	2.97	3.61
Synovex-H + Ralgro	32	4.58	3.04	3.66
Synovex-H + Synovex-H	32	4.47	3.22	3.75

IS REIMPLANTING PROFITABLE?

Research has consistently shown that one implant will boost steer and heifer gains from 15 to 25 lbs and increase feed efficiency 8 to 10%. However, the effective lifespan of Ralgro, Synovex and Steer-oid implants is only about 70 to 100 days. Thus, cattle need to be reimplanted every 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 months for implants to perform best. Numerous trials have shown that reimplanting with Ralgro mid-way through the suckling period will increase steer and heifer weaning weights an additional 20 to 30 lbs. Similarly, reimplanting feedlot steers has improved daily gain and feed efficiency 4 to 5% over single implanted steers in several 120 to 160 day trials. Reimplanted heifers fed for 110 to 120 days have outperformed single implanted heifers by 2 to 3 % in two recent KSU trials.